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NEWS RELEASES

For Immediate Release: July 6, 2007

CY07-267

RARE ENDANGERED SPECIES RETURNS HOME TO SASKATCHEWAN

The Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo is pleased to announce the arrival of Gidget, a four year old Black-Footed Ferret from the Toronto Zoo. Gidget is the first known Black-Footed Ferret, a critically endangered animal, to live in Saskatchewan for nearly seventy years. The Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo is one of only two zoos in Canada to display this animal.

Native to the Grasslands region of Saskatchewan, the Black-Footed Ferret is regarded as one of the most critically endangered mammal species in North America, with only 550 in the wild, 300 in the captive breeding program and 20 animals used in educational displays. The Canadian Wildlife Services declared Black-Footed Ferrets extinct in Canada in 1978. Gidget's visit to Saskatoon is an educational prelude to a captive breeding release program tentatively scheduled to happen before 2010, in the Val Marie area of Grasslands National Park.

All Black-Footed Ferrets held in the North American captive breeding program as well as the specimens in the wild, originated from 18 animals found in Wyoming in the early 1980's and are owned by the United States Department of the Interior. Any institution holding Black-Footed Ferrets must be licensed through a permitting system to participate in this conservation program. Gidget will remain at the Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo as long as she is not required for an education display at another facility. Her visit is at the discretion of the United States Department of the Interior.

The Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park & Zoo is open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. The parking fee of $2.00 applies to vehicles entering the Park. There is no charge for walk-ins. Admission to the Zoo is $7.10 for adults, $4.25 for youth ages 6 to 18 years, and $14.20 for families.

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Media: for more information contact:

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